

NSC BRIEFING

21 NOVEMBER 1955

BERLIN AND EAST GERMANY

I. Communists introduced temporary harassments around Berlin on Friday.

A. Eastbound West German vehicles were closely searched at East-West German border for Western publications for about six hours.

B. East German police clamped down on "reckless" driving by Western drivers on highways to Berlin.

C. Main ship canal between West Berlin and West Germany closed, evidently temporarily.

II. Purpose is probably to assert East German authority over internal affairs.

III. Last week's refugee flow into West Berlin increased over previous week from 3839 to 4450.

A. Weekly average since 1 July has been 3870.

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B. About 42 percent total refugees cross directly into West Germany.

1. Thus, total refugee figure probably almost double that of Berlin count.

IV. East German propaganda threats against Berlin continue.

V. Morale continues low in East Germany.

A. Soviet attitude at Geneva has destroyed remaining hopes for re-unification.

B. Prospects for food shortages and for conscription this winter will further weaken morale.

C. Another 17 June not expected.

1. Instead of serious demonstrations, opposition will be reflected in continued high refugee flow, unless forcibly stemmed by East German regime.